

AŞ ŞĀLIḤĀT

By the students of Riyāḍuṣ Ṣāliḥāt, Islāmic Da'wah Academy

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"The year consists of 12 months, 4 of which are sacred. Three of them occur consecutively; Dhul Qa'dah, Dhul Ḥijjah & Muḥarram, (the 4th being) **Rajab** of Mudar (named after the tribe of Mudar as they used to respect this month) which occurs between Jumādil-Ākhir & Sha'bān.
(Al-Bukhārī)

Disconnect To Reconnect

By Bint Akhtar and Bint Fateh (2nd & 3rd Year Students)

Did you know?

A study shows that 90% of 18-29 year olds spend an average of 2-4 hours each day on social media.

According to a recent government report, children who spend more than three hours on social websites are "more than twice as likely to show symptoms of mental ill-health"

Mobile phone usage is so strongly integrated into young people's behaviour that they start showing symptoms of behavioural addiction. Every time we receive a notification, be it a message, a weather update or anything, we release a chemical called dopamine, also known as the 'happy hormone'. Dopamine not only gives you joy but it gives you craving, the essence of addiction.

Gone are the days when a mobile phone was used merely to make and receive calls. We are living in the smartphone era, where a person's ability to access the internet is not restricted by time or place. We are all expected to connect our lives to others and be connected to everyone else's life, day and night. Even impressionable young people are expected to have their own social media accounts, as it is considered by many to be a must-have in modern society. Those who abstain are looked upon incredulously and the resulting harms are brushed aside, some of which are mentioned below.

Social media is used as a tool to advocate consumerism which encourages us to spend excessively on whatever we desire. A young person is easily swayed by the advertising of social media influencers, often purchasing items merely to stay on trend which slowly but surely leads to indulging in israf (wasting wealth). We should remember that Allāh ﷻ has given man the blessing of wealth, the expenditure of which he will be questioned about on the Day of Qiyaamah.



Social media can also have a detrimental effect on one's mental health. Young people often unknowingly end up comparing themselves to others, whether that be in terms of beauty, marriage, lifestyle or wealth. This leads to a deep sense of dissatisfaction and ungratefulness towards the blessings that Allāh ﷻ has given us. The whispers of Shayṭān, can also result in one falling prey to ḥasad (jealousy). It is our duty to express our shukr (gratitude) to Allāh ﷻ for all the bounties he has blessed us with. Allāh ﷻ states in the Glorious Qur'ān:

"If you are grateful, I will surely increase you." [14:7]

A large part of social media is the growing trend of following the lives of famous personalities and keeping up to date with their happenings. We find ourselves knowing more about the lives of the people we follow on social media than that of our pious predecessors, through whose efforts Islām and Islamic knowledge has reached us today. Our Muslim youth cannot help but follow the crowd as they consider famous personalities to be their role models. It is mentioned in a ḥadīth:

"On the Day of Judgement, a person will be with whom he loved." (At-Tirmidhī)

Undoubtedly, it is the desire of every Muslim to be alongside Nabī ﷺ on the Day of Judgement. Those people whose akhlāq (characteristics) and a'māl (actions) closely mirror that of Nabī ﷺ, will have the true love for Nabī ﷺ and will be with him on the Day of Judgement. Sitting in the company of such people will instil the love for our beloved Nabī ﷺ in our hearts and encourage us to follow the Sunnah in every aspect of our lives.

When we hear the word 'company', we have the connotation of physically being in the company of someone. However, when reading a book, a reader is in the company of the author. When listening to something, a listener is in the company of the speaker.

The same applies for watching a video or connecting with someone via social media. For as long as one is connected to someone via a medium, he is in the company of that person.

The following ḥadīth highlights the effect of company:

"The similitude of a good companion and an evil companion is like that of a person carrying musk and one who blows the bellows (i.e. a blacksmith). The person with the musk will either give you some, you may purchase it from him, or you will at least inhale a good fragrance from him. As for the one who blows the bellows, he will either burn your clothes, or you will inhale a foul smell from him."

(Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)

Social media may be helpful to communicate with loved ones.

However, there are harms that come with this benefit. Many people find themselves having more friends online, than friends outside the realm of the internet. Often, we are completely unaware of whose company we are truly in. These 'friends' can have a great influence on our thinking and our Īmān. Also, if we do not know exactly who we are communicating with, how can we be sure of their intentions? Physically we may be at home sitting with our family members but mentally we are fixed to our phones and in the company of strangers.

Ultimately, social media more often than not, results in a mu'min being distracted from his true purpose in life. Whilst performing ṣalāh and reciting the Qur'an our minds remain preoccupied. Unaware of its impact, we allow outside influences to have a negative effect on our spirituality, which is damaging our connection with our Creator. Whilst our precious life melts away like ice, we carelessly waste the blessing of time that Allāh ﷻ has granted us.

Our beloved Nabī ﷺ has stated:

"It is from the excellence of an individual's Islām that he leaves lā ya'nī (those things which do not benefit him)". (Abū Dāwūd)

How many times have we found ourselves spending hours on social media engaged in lā ya'nī which has eventually led us to sin? We need to free ourselves from the shackles of societal pressure by submitting ourselves to Allāh ﷻ. This can be done by:

- Regularly sitting in the company of pious personalities, reading their literature and attending their lectures so we can learn how to safeguard our Īmān and utilise our time wisely.
- Our honourable Shaykh, Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat ḥafīẓahullāh time and again emphasises the importance of creating a timetable to ensure that we utilise our time wisely. Shaykh ḥafīẓahullāh advises that one should define a task, fix a time for it to be completed and endeavour to complete it at that time.
- Every day, a few minutes should be taken out to do muḥāsabah (reflecting on one's actions).

It may be difficult at first, but we should try to make every effort to reduce the amount of time spent on social media. If we take the first step in rectifying our lives, Allāh ﷻ will make the path to Jannah easier for us. Allāh ﷻ states in a Ḥadīth Qudsī:

"And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running-."
(Al-Bukhārī)

In an era where every other person is active on social media, let us be active in carrying out a'māluṣ ṣāliḥah (good deeds).

"Guide us on the Straight Path. (1:5)"

By Bint Saajid (3rd Year Student)

Many a time in our day to day life, we will have experienced that we made a wrong choice which led to a mishap, whether minor or major. For example, we may have uttered something we were not supposed to or visited a place we shouldn't have or let our gaze fall upon something it shouldn't have fallen upon. In all of these situations we had lost control over the matter, albeit for a moment and consequently lost hold of the straight path causing us to sin or lead to actions which we later regretted.

To protect us from such mishaps and to aid us in acquiring guidance to the Straight Path, Allāh ﷻ, has taught us an extremely important supplication in Sūrah Fātiḥah which is comprehensive yet concise, namely the āyah mentioned above. Its importance can be noted by the fact that it is the only supplication of the Glorious Qur'ān which Allāh ﷻ has chosen for His servants to repeat in every rak'ah of every ṣalāh performed.

Daily, we seek guidance from Allāh ﷻ, a minimum of twenty times within the ṣalāh we perform. Bearing this in mind, if we recite this beautiful sūrah with sincerity and understanding, contemplating on its powerful words and profound message, not only will it aid us in attaining concentration in our ṣalāh, increasing and enhancing our bond with our Creator, but we will also reap the vast benefits of this supplication in our day to day lives. The benefits of this supplication are not only limited to matters concerning our Dīn but also our worldly pursuits. If this supplication is accepted in our favour, it will inspire us to make decisions which will ensure we prosper and further, will guarantee us guidance upon the ṣirāṭul-mustaḳīm, thus securing us success in this life as well as ultimate salvation and absolute bliss in the Hereafter inshā'allāh. May Allāh ﷻ guide us all to the ṣirāṭul-mustaḳīm. Āmīn.

A Cure for Three Serious Illnesses

By Bint Khizar (1st Year Student)

If one was to try to thank Allāh ﷻ for the blessings He has showered us with, one would surely find oneself unsuccessful in this regard. Our beloved Nabī ﷺ has taught us a beautiful du'ā which should be recited morning and evening, through which we can express our gratitude.

اللَّهُمَّ مَا أَصْبَحَ بِي مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ أَوْ بِأَحَدٍ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ فَمِنْكَ وَحْدَكَ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ، فَלَكَ الْحَمْدُ، وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ

"O Allāh, all the favours that I or anyone from Your creation has received in the morning/evening are from You Alone. You have no partner. To You Alone belongs praise and all thanks."

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: "Whoever says this in the morning has fulfilled his obligation to thank Allāh ﷻ for that day. And whoever says it in the evening (replacing مَا أَصْبَحَ with مَا أَمْسَى) has fulfilled his obligation for the night". (Abū Dāwūd)

Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat ḥafīzahullāh states that he was once inspired by a beautiful point in regards to this du'ā, that it can be a cure for three serious spiritual illnesses: self-conceit, pride and jealousy. Ḥaḍrat explains that in this du'ā we are saying to Allāh ﷻ that all the favours we have been blessed with are from You and not of our own doing. This will eliminate the traits of self-conceit and pride. As for the favours others have been blessed with, they are also from You and if they are from You, why should I be jealous? This will eliminate the trait of jealousy as Allāh ﷻ through His infinite knowledge is aware of what is best for each individual.

THE IGNITION OF

Love



We may be able to choose our friends, however we cannot choose our family as they are selected for us by Allāh ﷻ alone. We have been created to be dependent on others and for this reason Allāh ﷻ has given us our family. Due to this intimate connection, they hold special rights that we must fulfil. This connection is so special that family ties are not just limited to our time in this world but even in Jannah (paradise), where Allāh ﷻ will reunite us with them. Allāh ﷻ has stated in the Glorious Qur'ān regarding the dwellers of Jannah.

"And those who believed and their children followed them in belief, we will join their children with them..." (52:21)

In Jannah there will be many bounties which no eye has ever seen and no ear has ever heard of, yet Allāh ﷻ declares that He will join us with our families. Let us ponder for a moment how Allāh ﷻ has made our nature that we will still yearn for our families amidst the heavenly gifts we will be bestowed with.

Family love must be cultivated like a garden through the growth of pure love, time and sincerity. And that love will only come if we give due importance to our families and spend quality time with them. There is no form of relaxation and fun more rewarding in both worlds than that of spending time with one's family.



INVESTING TIME

It is apparent that we have many duties to fulfil throughout the day but short and frequent visits are only what are needed to make someone's day.

Our relatives should be visited solely for the Pleasure of Allāh ﷻ to maintain love in the family. With this intention Allāh ﷻ will create even more love and harmony between all. Similarly, if they are in need of any help we must go out of our way to help them as assisting one's relatives carries double reward; one for assisting and another for upholding family ties.



Subhānallāh! These noble qualities will also be a practical means of guidance for our children and in this way, strong family ties can be maintained for generations inshā'allāh. Spending little time visiting a relative may seem insignificant to us, but we never know the happiness it can bring them as what people value most is the time taken to visit them.

GIFT-GIVING GENERATES LOVE



Rasūlullāh ﷺ has said,

"Give gifts and you will love one another."
(Al-Adabul-Mufrad).

We should occasionally give gifts to our relatives as this is a proven way of endearing oneself to others. With a sincere intention no gift is too small to achieve this.



Whilst spending time with younger relatives we must not forget the older generation: our grandparents, great uncles and aunts. They often eagerly await company so as to reminisce the old days. This will break the barriers between generations creating a harmonious atmosphere between young and old. Our elderly are substantial in their wisdom and experiences and so by sitting with them, their advices will surely benefit us.

Rendering service to them will bring us closer to Allāh ﷻ as the sincere du'ā that comes from their hearts will be readily accepted, inshā'allāh. Servitude to others is a powerful way of gaining closeness to Allāh ﷻ.

Nowadays the elderly suffer immense loneliness and sadness due to the family *disregarding their duties to them*; therefore, it is upon us to relieve them of this by ensuring regular visits and rendering service to them.



In a house frequented by guests, the Mercy and Blessings of Allāh ﷻ descend, therefore when our relatives come to visit, we must welcome them with a sincere heart and go out of our way to make them feel comfortable. We must remember that true hospitality comes from the heart. When our relatives come unexpectedly and we have not prepared anything special, we should not feel ashamed. If we offer whatever little food is available wholeheartedly, Allāh ﷻ has the power to put extra taste and blessings in that little amount. Subsequently, the Giver of Love ﷻ will create more love and peace in our hearts, as the luxuries of this world can never be equivalent to the contentment of the heart.



Making memories is one way to strengthen our bond with our relatives and this happens when we keep the aforementioned points in mind. We can never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory. These become precious recollections we constantly cherish when a relative has passed away. This can instigate us to do īṣāluth-thawāb (the act of performing a good deed and passing its reward to someone else) for them. There is also hope that when we pass away, we will be remembered and sent īṣāluth-thawāb too, inshā'allāh.

Just as the flame of a candle extinguishes unless it is surrounded by air, the bond with our relatives will also extinguish if we don't surround them with open hearts full of warmth and affection. We make du'ā that we maintain family ties for the Pleasure of Allāh ﷻ and thus ignite love and compassion into this bleak world, starting with our honorable family members, which are a wonderful gift from our Creator ﷻ.



The Conscious Cook

By a 1st Year Student

Allāh ﷻ has created the Earth and everything in it for our benefit. Our planet, the air we breathe, the food and drink we sustain ourselves with, are all invaluable blessings from Allāh ﷻ. It is our duty to utilise these blessings correctly and sustainably in order to show gratitude to our Provider ﷻ. Allāh ﷻ instructs us in the Qur'ān,

"Eat, drink and do not be excessive. Verily, Allāh does not like the wasteful." (7:31)

As Muslims we should be at the forefront of advocating a simple, sustainable and non-wasteful manner of living. Many of us are becoming more conscious of this, particularly due to the current heightened awareness of climate change. However, we should all take practical steps in order to really make a difference.

THE KITCHEN IS A GREAT PLACE TO START!

REDUCING FOOD WASTE

- Store perishable items correctly to avoid them rotting.
- Have a section/shelf in the fridge for items that need to be used quickly/first.
- Shop wisely; create meal plans and always have a shopping list to avoid buying unnecessary items.
- Be creative with leftovers; use them to create another meal.

AVOIDING PLASTIC OR REUSING PLASTIC

- Avoid pre-packaged produce where possible. Buy loose (unpacked) fruit and vegetables instead.
- Reuse shopping bags or use cloth bags for shopping.
- Instead of clingfilm, try silicone food covers, storing in containers you already own or investing in beeswax wrappers.
- Reuse empty jars and containers to store other items.



SAVING WATER

- Fill the kettle with only as much water as you need. This will also help save on your electricity bills!
- Collect water used for rinsing fruit/veg and drained water from pasta etc. and use to water plants.



COMPOSTING

This benefits the environment by:

- Recycling food waste e.g. fruit and vegetable peels. These decompose into soil which can then be used in the garden.
- Conserving landfill space. The waste that can be composted accounts for a third of all the waste we produce!

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN COMPOST BIN

1. Have a small container in the kitchen in which you can collect items for composting.



2. Place your compost bin on bare soil in a reasonably sunny area.

3. To begin the actual pile, add leaves, soil or other dry garden debris.

4. Now you can start filling your kitchen scraps! A good compost is made up of 50% browns (dried leaves, egg shells, egg boxes) and 50% greens (fruit and vegetable peelings, tea bags, grass cuttings). You can also add paper and paper towels in moderation.

5. Mix your compost every two weeks to ensure it breaks down effectively.

STATISTICS

Of the 10.2 million tonnes of food wasted in the year 2015, 7.1 million tonnes were from household food waste.

The most common items of waste in the UK are potatoes, bread and milk.

8 million tonnes of plastic were estimated to be dumped in our ocean in 2015.



Take benefit of **five before five**: Your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your prosperity before your poverty, your free time before you are preoccupied, and your life before your death" (Al-Hākim)

In the Journey of Life

By Bint Abdul Qadir
(4th Year Student)

It all starts from the time we are born;
When we breathe our first in this temporary world.
Whilst we are crying the surrounding is cheerful,
To which the eyes open and assess the situation.
We begin to see what we had only heard before,
And we find our hearts learning, desiring more.

We grow up to be that carefree child,
The one that plays regardless of the time.
The child that runs to and fro,
The child that has no aching bones.
So engrossed do we become in these toys and play,
That they become the fleeting purpose of each passing day.
Gradually, as we age we begin to realise,
the futility of these childish games and toys.
But now we enter an era of intoxication,
An era of new "toys", technology, and beautification.

The next stage of life quietly creeps in,
Our habits change and so do our likes.
We begin to think and understand,
And the acquisition of money becomes our bottom line.
We work tirelessly to achieve these goals,
And during this struggle we fall into a hole.
Suddenly, everything becomes a race against time,
In which our poor health comes last in line.

It is during this deception that our health deteriorates,
But we do not realise this until it's too late.
Alas! Illness after illness; a merciful reminder from Allāh ﷻ,
That our life is almost over and death is not too far.

And so we begin to regret the time we wasted,
In trying to achieve things which had no basis.
Our wealth, properties, children and health,
Nothing has any value now as it is time to bid farewell.

My dear readers! Did you not see the pattern,
Amongst the above, that was hidden?
In childhood
We have health + time but no wealth
In adulthood
We have health + wealth but no time
In old age
We have wealth + time but no health

Therefore, value these phases in the journey of
life,
To avoid regret in the Afterlife...

Invest in Life

"Life is a great asset; if you invest it properly
you will reap its fruits in abundance in both
worlds."

- Shaykh Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat ḥafīzahullāh

"bzzzzzzzz"
Read me!

BEE AMAZED AT THESE UN-BEE-LIEVABLE FACTS!



We usually scream at the sight or sound of a buzzing bee but did you know bees are an integral (very important) part of human EXISTENCE. Most of the food we eat relies on their pollination. Scientists say that bees are such creatures without which the human race would perish!

Pretty amazing right?? Subhānallāh!



Rewind roughly 1440 years and you will 'bee' astounded to learn that Allāh ﷻ mentions the bee in the noble Qur'ān under the chapter: النُّحْل (The Bee):

"And the Lord inspired the bee, saying: Take your habitations in the mountains and in the trees and in what they erect. Then, eat of all fruits and follow the ways of your Lord made easy (for you)". There comes forth from their bellies a drink of varying colour wherein is healing for men. Verily in this is indeed a sign for people who think." [16:68-69]

DID YOU KNOW?

- The noble Qur'ān mentions the bee in the feminine (female) form. We now know thanks to modern research that the queen bee and female worker bees have much more important roles than the male bees.

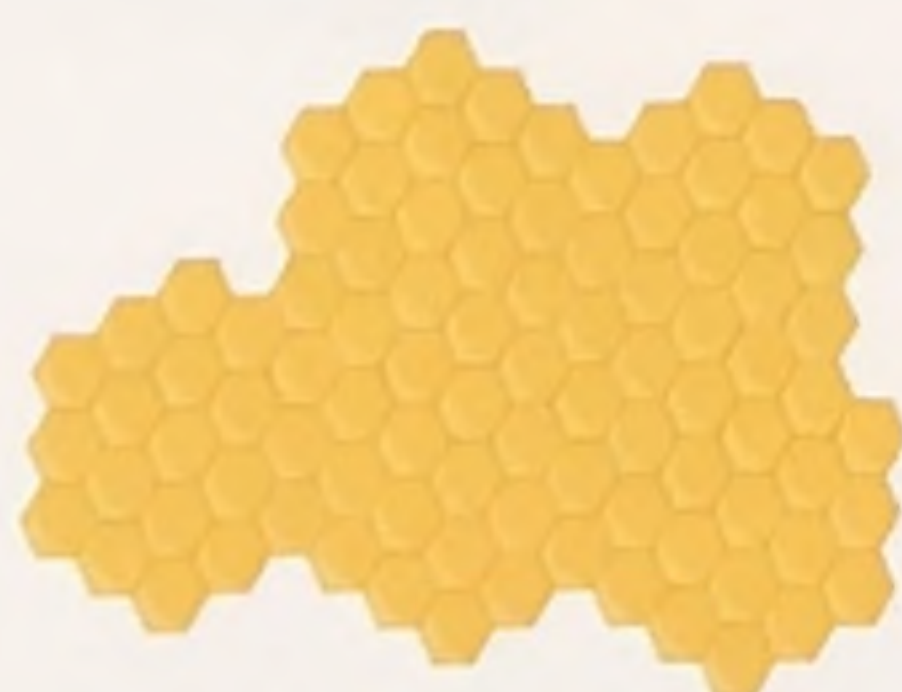
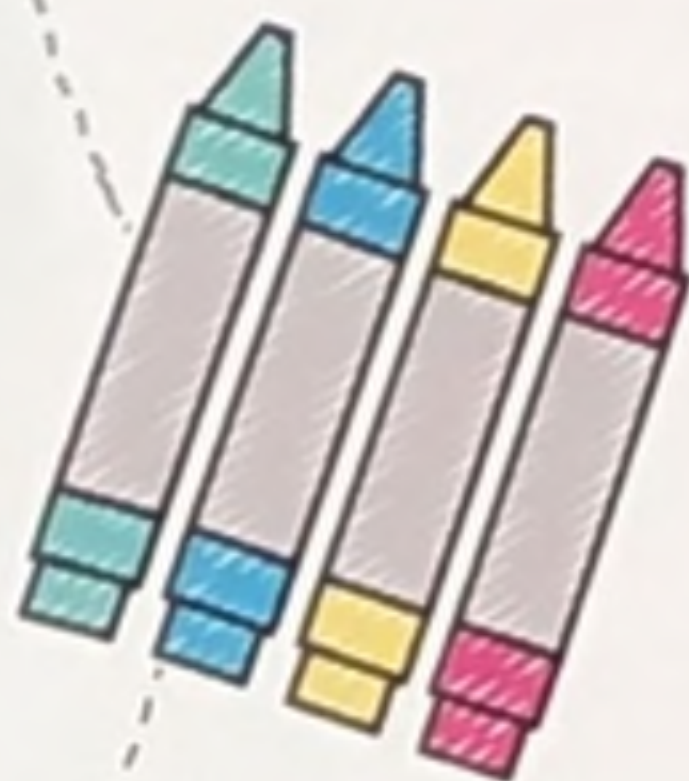
- Sadly, bees are disappearing at an alarming rate and some are classified as endangered (close to extinction) mainly because of the pesticides (harmful chemicals) we use, pollution and climate change.



- Bees produce honey which fights illnesses as is stated in the above āyah of the noble Qur'ān.



- Bees also produce beeswax which is used in lots of household items for example candles, creams, lip balms, crayons and much more!



SO WHAT CAN I DO TO SAVE BEES?

The best way is to plant bee-friendly flowers and herbs wherever you can, be it in your garden or window box. Bees' favourites include foxglove, bluebell, clover, honeysuckle, lavender, rosemary, thyme and chives. These have lots of pollen and nectar for the bees to feed on.

And most importantly, next time a bee buzzes by, appreciate the role Allāh ﷻ has granted it and try your best not to hurt it!